

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicants : Manfred DOMBEK)
)
 Appln. No. : Not yet assigned)
)
 Filed : Concurrently herewith)
)
 For : PROCESS FOR FORMING GROUPS OF ARTICLES OF THE
 TOBACCO PROCESSING INDUSTRY

INFORMATION DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

In accordance with the duty of disclosure under 37 C.F.R. Sections 1.56, 1.97, and 1.98, Applicants hereby submit the following documents for the Examiner's consideration.

- (1) German Patent Application No. 1 632 205 published June 30, 1967, which is discussed in the instant application beginning in paragraph [0003];
- (2) U.S. Patent No. 3,603,445 issued to Zausch et al. September 7, 1971, which is identified as a family member of item (1) and is discussed in the instant application beginning in paragraph [0003]; and
- (3) European Patent Application No. 0 602 683 published June 22, 1994, which is discussed in the instant application beginning in paragraph [0005].

The following documents were cited in a European Search Report conducted in European Patent Application No. 03 00 3658, which is a counterpart of the above-captioned application. In particular, the European Examiner cited:

- (4) U.S. Patent No. 4,693,374 issued September 15, 1987 to Dall'Osso as an "X" category document (i.e., a document that calls into question of the novelty or inventive step when considered alone). In particular, the European Examiner noted column 2, lines 29 - 65 and Figure 1 as relevant to claims 1 - 3 and 6 of the European application;
- (5) U.S. Patent No. 4,445,520 issued to Knight et al. May 1, 1984 as an "X" category document. The European Examiner noted column 1, lines 58 - 66 and Figure 1 as relevant to claims 1 - 3 and 6 of the European application;
- (6) U.S. Patent No. 3,616,901 issued to Groves on November 2, 1971 as an "X" category document. In particular, the European Examiner noted column 2, line 33 - column 3, line 3 and the Figures as relevant to claims 1 - 3 and 6 of the European application;
- (7) U.S. Patent No. 4,011,950 issued to McLoughlin et al. March 15, 1977 as an "X" category document with regard to claims 1 - 3 and 6 of the European application. The European Examiner noted the Abstract and Figures as being particularly relevant;
- (8) U.S. Patent No. 4,584,870 issued to Doerman on April 29, 1986 as an "A" category document (i.e., a document relevant to the technological background of the

invention). In particular, the European Examiner noted column 1, lines 7 - 31 as relevant to claims 4 - 6 8, and 9 of the European application;

(9) U.S. Patent No. 4,792,049 issued to Janoick et al. December 20, 1988 as an "A" category document with regard to claims 4, 6, and 7 of the European application. The European Examiner noted the entire document as being particularly relevant; and

(10) European Patent Application No. 0 764 582 published March 26, 1997 as an "A" category document with regard to claim 1 of the European application. The European Examiner the Abstract and Figures as being particularly relevant. Further, Applicant notes that this document is discussed in the instant application beginning in paragraph [0004]. For the Examiner's convenience, Applicant submits herewith a copy of U.S. Patent No. 5,718,102 issued February 17, 1998 to Draghetti, which is identified by the Annex to the Search Report as a U.S. patent family member of the above-cited European application.

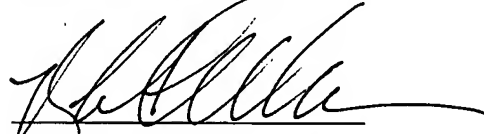
Each of the above-cited documents are listed on the enclosed completed copy of the PTO-1449 Form. Accordingly, the Examiner is requested to consider these documents and to indicate such consideration by returning a signed and initialed copy of the PTO-1449 Form with the first official communication.

Moreover, copies of the European Search Report and of the cited non-U.S. patent documents are being submitted herewith. However, pursuant to the U.S. Patent and

Trademark Office's decision to waive the requirement under 37 C.F.R 1.98 (a)(2)(i), copies of the cited/listed U.S. patents and U.S. published patent applications are not enclosed herewith. Moreover, if any copies are needed, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned.

Should there be any questions or comments, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,
Manfred DOMBEK


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February 12, 2004
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*EXAMINER: Initial if citation considered, whether or not citation is in conformance with MPEP 609; Draw line through citation if not in conformance and not considered. Include copy of this form with next communication to applicant.